



The Benedictine Tide

# Benedictine Sisters of Florida

*Touching Lives Through Prayer and Service*

Spring 2025

## *Pilgrims of Hope*

**“I give you a future full of hope.”**

Each evening, here at the monastery, we pray together an adaptation of Pope Francis’ 2025 Jubilee Prayer. It reads in part: *May the grace of this Jubilee Year reawaken in us “Pilgrims of Hope”, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.* We close our prayer with a familiar Benedictine expression: *That in all things God may be gloried.*

Allow me a short “why” lesson. Between Christmas Eve and the feast of the Epiphany (January 5), Pope Francis opened a series of holy doors in the Vatican and throughout Rome, signifying the start of the *Jubilee year of Hope* with the theme “Pilgrims of Hope.” In line with an ancient tradition, the Catholic Church proclaims a Jubilee Year every 25 years to increase opportunities to experience God’s grace. A Jubilee Year is a time of forgiveness, reconciliation and hope, and a time for the faithful to embark on their own pilgrimages of faith.



Earlier this year Bishop Parkes invited all in the Diocese to join in person, or via live-stream, in launching the “Jubilee Year of Hope” with a solemn Opening Mass and Procession at St. Jude Cathedral. Children were encouraged to dress as one of the Three Magi to join the procession symbolizing the journey of hope guided by the Word of God. During his year the faithful will be able to receive what is known as a “plenary indulgence”, or the cleansing of the soul as if the person has just been baptized. Additional Jubilee Year activities, pilgrimages and other events will be held during the year which will formally conclude in Rome on January 6, 2026.

I can echo the sentiment our Bishop Gregory Parkes’ in his introductory remarks in our diocesan 2025-2029 Pastoral Plan. Our Bishop writes: *“I have always firmly believed in establishing a shared vision with clear priorities and attainable goals ... with hopes for the future and joy in areas of ministry where we have excelled in the past. By working together, we have grown in our relationship with Christ and with one other and in doing so, we have cooperated with Him in building up the Kingdom of God.”*

For the first ordinary jubilee since the Great Jubilee of 2000, Pope Francis has chosen the theme of hope. The Pontiff writes in his proclamation for the Holy Year, “hope is a virtue that does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God’s love.”

You may wonder: Where did the idea of a Jubilee Year spring from? Jubilees have biblical roots. In the Mosaic era jubilee years were to be held every 50 years for the freeing of slaves and forgiveness of debts as a manifestation of God’s mercy. In the year 1300, Pope Boniface VIII reestablished the practice. Opening of the Holy Door is one of the essential elements of a jubilee year. These special doors, found at St. Peter’s Basilica and Rome’s three other papal basilicas, are sealed from the inside and only opened to walk through during the holy year. Pope Francis

(Con’t on page 2)

## Don't Get Stuck

I love my Roman Catholic faith. It is my spiritual home. It gives me joy to see the sanctuary lamp because it reminds me that Jesus is present in the chapel just as surely as he was during His time on earth. Stained glass, with its color and diffusion of light, is a reminder of the variety of gifts spoken of in Paul's letters to early Christians. The pews, the vessels of the altar, the beautifully made tile floor, the smell of incense, are all part of the tradition, the continuity, that knit my time on earth to the eternity to follow. The light, the color, and the beautiful works of art all remind me that I am one of the "Pilgrims of Hope".

Above the altar hangs a crucifix. Catholic churches are required to use a crucifix as a central symbol of their faith. It serves as a visual reminder of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and his suffering and death. This image of the suffering Christ is especially evocative during the Lenten season.

But the crucifix remains in its place above the altar year round. As Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Ordinary Time, Advent and Christmas pass the crucifix remains fixed above the altar. We celebrate Jesus' Resurrection, His Ascension, His Birth, and His Baptism. As we kneel before the altar during each season of the liturgical year however, our eyes continue to gaze on the image of Jesus' moments of greatest suffering.

It can become very easy to leave Mass with the image of the crucifix foremost in our minds regardless of the current season of the liturgical season. But be careful not to get "stuck". Jesus didn't stay dead. He lives. We are pilgrims of hope, and we walk with the One who is alive, who has conquered death, and who will raise us to eternal life. Rejoice!

Sister Eileen Dunbar

(Con't from page 1)

himself opened two of the holy doors for the 2025 Jubilee saying: "For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the 'door' of our salvation, whom the Church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere." Wishing for the 2025 Jubilee to be a source of hope for those in hardship, Pope Francis established, for the first time, a Holy Door in a Roman prison. At the opening on December 26, St. Stephan Day, the commander of the Penitentiary said, "This is a gift of hope that is given to all of humanity and particularly to the humanity that lives in this prison environment."

Among the jubilee visitors to Rome, it is estimated that 2.5 million will come from the United States. Rome's mayor remarked that, "A Jubilee is a special occasion, because it is not traditional tourism. But naturally, those who visit will admire the beauty of Rome." To help visitors find their way to the countless number of faith-filled sites in Rome — and to uncover many of the city's hidden gems - visitors can become pilgrims as they use their phones' GPS to navigate the ancient streets of the Eternal City while learning more about its Christian history. Visitors will be challenged to understand that "You are in the presence of God, who loves you and never abandons you, even in the moments you are suffering, you are in doubt, or you feel yourself alone."

Let us then be drawn to this hope! Mindful of the exhortation of St. Paul in the letter to the Ephesians, may we, remember that through our witness, we are sharing the mystery given to us for others' benefit. May the way we live — our words and actions - say to the world, in so many words: "Hold firm, take heart and hope in the Lord!" (Psalm 27:14). May we rely on God's word, spoken to the prophet Jeremiah: "I know the plans I have for you, plans for good and not disaster. **I give you a future full of hope.**"

Sister Roberta Bailey

## PATIENT PILGRIMS



All living beings have new beginnings, as so aptly described in the Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 3.

vv. 1-8 **“There is an appointed time for everything under the heavens.”**

Hurricane Milton came making a mess, misery and mourning.

**“A time to be born and a time to die.”** Recovery time—October 10 onward... grapple with greenhouse questions....

**“A time to plant and a time to uproot the plant.”** Clear debris....keep moving on....start in-ground vegetables and cool weather crops.

**“A time to kill and a time to heal.”** Ponder a plan of action. Can we afford to rebuild? Can we afford NOT to rebuild?

**“A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance.”** Need to pause University Biology/ Ecology internship training in aquaponics. Spirits only dampened yet survived, so move ahead as pilgrim people with hope.

**“ A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them.”**  
Gather broken banana plants for mulch — volunteer offers of help

**“A time to embrace,”** Why restart aquaponics—obvious reasons, care of all creation, Community resilience, hope for donor generosity, embrace and continue sustainable future ministry

**“And a time to be far from embraces.”** Will insurance cover the loss? Provide reasonable and accurate information with (sad) photos for the claim.

**“A time to seek,”** Pray for guidance and wait in patience.

**“And a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.”** Use spare time to purge unneeded belongings.

**“A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak.”** On-site visit with Insurance Adjuster Cameron explaining the tilapia system history and view the greenhouse...followed-up contacts.

**“A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.”** In these conflicting times, we live and move living with purpose and peace.

**“God has made everything appropriate to its time, and has put the timeless into our hearts...there is nothing better than to be glad...”** Against all odds we share the peace of Christ.

v. 13-15 **“For everyone to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of all their labor is a gift of God...whatever God does will endure forever...that God may be revered...and God restores.”**

***YES, insurance has paid the replacement cost of our greenhouse.***

**As Christian pilgrims we await with patience and hope for the time Jesus will come in glory because so many events in life are preparing us for endless time.**

**And by the time you have read this all should be rebuilt.**



**Thank you, Phil Reasons, Aquasol International and all our contributors.**

Sister Miriam Cosgrove

# HOPE

Part of that triad, Faith, Hope and Charity, HOPE is the hardest to pin down or explain. It seems such a future thing—like the tot's hope for a new toy or the teen's hope to go to the prom. Yet, Hope is an adult thing. Hope is to live and grow in us Now. S. Joan Chittister says, "The spiritual task of life is to feed Hope. It is not to be found outside of us. HOPE lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within."

Yes, we will meet hardship, sadness, illness, loss and death. A question S. Joan poses that I've asked myself and others in spiritual direction is "What's right with what's wrong?" When we reflect we realize that God has used these hard times to teach us and bring us closer to Himself, and to our true selves.

To despair is to give up on God.

Hope accepts whatever happens because God is in charge.

The spiritual life is to feed HOPE so we can bear struggle, difficulty and come out better ie. Be-come what God intends for us.

The foundation of both Faith and Charity is HOPE. We've been "Women on the Move" \* for 135+ years; the Benedictine Sisters of Florida will never settle in—we'll continue to grow and change (our monastic profession of conversion call us to this) we'll keep on giving new expression and meaning to Faith and Charity.

Want to join us? I HOPE so—become a Sister, an Oblate or a Volunteer.

Visitors always say they sense Peace here; I think it is also HOPE they tune into. Come for a retreat, and/or spiritual direction. HOPE is a gift we share and you, renewed, strengthened can pass it on.

Contact us—give us a call—come visit!

Pope Francis named **2025** a Jubilee year for Pilgrims of Hope.

We're all Pilgrims of Hope; we're all on our way called by God to Live and Believe.

Hope is a part of the triad: Faith, Hope and Charity.

We are pilgrims—we're in process, not finished yet—a work in process—God's work and our work.

As Benedictine Sisters we are truly "Pilgrims of Hope" We are using our time and talents to be a sign of Hope, to give Hope, and to help others witness to Hope.

Don't forget—You are a Pilgrim of Hope! Pilgrims know where they want to go and travel in Hope.

Some folks, too many in our world today, are hungry for Hope—remember them—be a sign of Hope to them.

Rooted in God, we hope in Christ and stand before others with open heart and hands, as the philosophy and Corporate Commitment of the Benedictine Sisters states: "to respond with the compassion of Christ" and "to feed the hungers of the people of God."

I hope you will let God work in you.

Remember He is **WIT** you! **W**ith you, **I**n you, and working **T**hrough you. Be sure of our prayer for you—blessings on your pilgrim's life journey!

Be sure of our prayer for you—blessings on your pilgrim's life journey!

Sister Mary David Hydro

# HOPE IN GOD



Hope in God can be defined as a confident expectation that God will fulfill the promises that He has made to us. This type of hope is much more than wishing. It is a conscious choice to trust in Him and to believe that things will get better as we center our lives on God. Throughout our lives, there will be people who will disappoint us. There will be things that fall through. There will be things that change unexpectedly or cause pain, heartache, and sorrow. God is the one constant source of light and love that we can have hope in. We never have to worry about Him letting us down or disappointing us. God is our beloved Father. He is constant and will always be there for us His beloved children. Hope in God is like an anchor that keeps us steady when everything else seems to be changing around us.

Our hope in God has a strengthening power. Hope is a powerful force that sustains us in the most difficult and trying moments of life. In hopeless situations, hope gives us the strength to keep moving forward, trusting that God is able to turn things around. Without hope, people fall into despair, but with hope, we can see beyond our current circumstances and trust in God's promises. This hope increases our faith and our ability to keep moving forward despite the difficult things we are facing, one day at a time. Hope in God can bind up our broken hearts and heal every wound. He truly promises that when we have hope in Him, we will be given strength like that of an eagle. "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, soar on wings like eagles, run and not grow weary, walk and not faint" (Isiah 40:31).

Most of the time when we pray and ask for help, we do not receive immediate answers to our prayers. It is even less likely for us to receive exactly what we prayed for in the moment we want to receive it. But that doesn't mean that God doesn't love us or is not aware of us. He is always blessing us and sending us love. We are the ones that must open our hearts, minds and our eyes to acknowledge those blessings.

As we go deeper hoping in God, we can increase our capacity to be patient and endure as we are in the middle of hard situations. As we actively wait for God to fulfill His promises to us with hope, He will keep His promises.

We do not need to remain stuck in darkness. We do not need to stay in a place of despair or discouragement, wishing that things in our lives were different. With hope we can ease the pain of unbearable loss. Hope in God gives us peace as we trust that good things are coming our way. Romans 15:13 reminds us that God is the source of hope, filling us with joy and peace as we trust in Him.

Hope is what keeps us anchored in God's promises, restores our strength, and helps us endure life's challenges. It breathes life into dead situations and gives us the confidence to trust in God's promises. Let us, therefore, hold on to hope, no matter how hopeless things may seem, trusting that God will work all things for our good in the midst of hopeless situations, by putting our trust in God.

Everything happens for a reason, and the challenging times in our lives serve a purpose. They can help us to learn and grow in the ways that He sees fit, so that we can be better prepared for the blessings that He plans to give us. No matter what, God will bless us with what is best and what will help us the most.

Sister Elizabeth Mathai

*Laudato si* Pope Francis

We must steward the Earth and all creation  
to preserve it for future generations...  
in a fragile world, entrusted to human care,

photo: S. Miriam  
Cosgrove

challenging us to devise intelligent ways...

03/16/2018

There's suffering but  
Death can be the doorway to life  
Take up the cross-- Live!  
We're called to more than endure  
Give of self, show care, give Hope!

Sister Mary David Hydro

### *Upcoming Events Calendar*

- April 13** Palm Sunday
- April 18** Good Friday
- April 20** Easter Sunday
- May 25** Oblate Sunday
- Jun 29-Jul 4** Sisters' Annual Retreat
- July 11** Summer Feast of St. Benedict



### *In Memoriam*

**Lenore Tingerthal**  
October 2024

**Carol Romey ('62) Ritchey**  
December 30, 2024

**Barbara Molloy - Oblate and Live-in Volunteer**  
March 17, 2025

# The Pause that Renews

## Are you looking for:

- A retreat opportunity?
- A location for your sabbatical?
- A relaxing vacation from the hectic world in which we live?
- A place to just be?

## Fill Your Spirit!

Give yourself the gift of time away in quiet reflection; time away to concentrate on what you know is important; time to connect with your deeper self; time to just enjoy yourself!

New experiences, surroundings and people often inspire us in unexpected ways. The Benedictine Sisters of Florida strive to create an inviting space for all our guests.

## You are Welcome Here!



In the beautiful rolling hills of Pasco County, FL, step into the quiet calm of our sunlit home -  
**Holy Name Monastery.**

Tucked away from the rest of the world, you'll find your own comfortable place to recharge...a sanctuary from the bustle of everyday life.

You will be refreshed by hospitality in true Benedictine style. Time is yours to structure! Your stay includes a variety of amenities and opportunities:

- Guest rooms each with private bath
- Stroll/exercise along our prayer path
- Relax, reflect and enjoy nature's beauty
- Daily monastic prayer and Eucharist
- Explore the neighboring Grotto of St. Leo Abbey
- Close proximity to cultural and artistic attractions

## RESERVE YOUR STAY TODAY!

12138 Wichers Rd, PO Box 2450  
St. Leo, FL 33574-2450  
Phone: (352) 588-8320  
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*Benedictine Sisters of Florida*  
Touching Lives through Prayer and Service

# *Heartfelt Thanks to our Donors for Your Support to our Annual Appeal 2024*

Each of the following friends and supporters made a difference in our ability to “make ends meet”, reach out to others, and pray for you, your loved ones, the community and the world.

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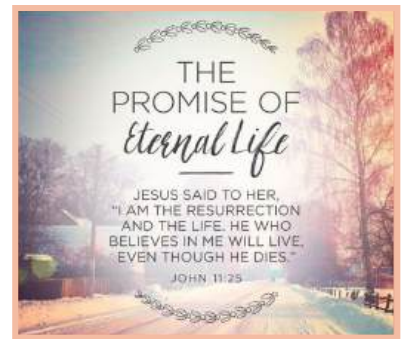
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*Sister Irma Multer*

Rey and Juanita Casarez

Ruby Hlavinka

Michael R. Scher, DDS, PA

*Annunciata Newman*

Martha Newman Bennett

*Joe and Dorothy*

*Newman*

Donna Kremer

*Foli Ann Perez*

Ken and Glorian Weatherly

*Don Perkins*

Margaret Menke

*Tom Piazza*

Mary T. Crosby

*Robert E. Rhodes*

Staci Shelley

*Sophia Richter*

Frank and Patricia Richter

*Doris Marie Riddle*

Sheila R. Riddle



*Sister Mary Grace*

*Riddles*

Mary Kathryn Calvert

*Don Roy*

Sheila A. Milazzo

Beverly Roy

*Santos Family*

Margaret Santos

*Stella Sokolowski*

Lynn Sapnas

*James and Jane*

*Strenski*

Susan Splain

*Betty Lee Ulbrich*

Barbara Sutton

*Frank S. Vito*

Kathleen Vito

*Sister Dianne*

*Wansley*

Jane E. Martinson

Jon and Barbara Sinnott

Charles and Constance Sliger

*Carol Woodard*

Randall and Pam Smith

Gary Woodard

### *Gifts In Honor Of*

*Sister Jean Abbott*

Matthew J. Clarke

*Sister Roberta Bailey*

Fern Aefsky

Art and Jean Becotte

Matthew J. Clarke

Kathleen Daye

Thomas and Mary Maher

Msgr. Frank Mouch

Staci Shelley

Bernd, Holly and Sophia

Sokolowski

Theresa Valentino

*Benedictine Sisters of  
Florida*

Vicki Pettus

Theresa Valentino

*Joeseph Chytka*

Ann Chytka

*Sister Miriam*

*Cosgrove*

Dr. Pius and Geetha Jacob

*Teresa Dadez*

Dr. Edward Dadez

*Sister Donna Dewitt*

Matthew J. Clarke

*Sister Eileen Dunbar*

Matthew J. Clarke

*Sister Mary Romana*

*Gomez*

Colleen Tiesler

*Joe and Rose*

*Herrmann*

John C. Herrmann

*Holy Name*

*Monastery*

Vicki Pettus

*Sister Mary David*

*Hydro*

James and Katherine

Krebsbach

Thomas and Mary Maher

*Peter LaBruzzo*

Michael and Susan Wheeler

*Trudy LaBruzzo*

Michael and Susan Wheeler

*Sister Jerome Leary*

Matthew J. Clarke

*Sister Elizabeth*

*Mathai*

Matthew J. Clarke

George and Rasamma Cyriac

*Rocky Milliman*

Norm and Beverly Austgen

*Joseph and Mary*

*Rachel*

David and Tracey Roberts, Jr.

*Edward Sokolowski*

Lynn Sapnas

*Luella Wilson*

Cynthia Selph

If for some reason you feel that we have not included your name in our listing, please feel free to reach out to us to have it corrected.



*Holy Name Monastery*

*PO Box 2450*

*St. Leo, FL 33574-2450*

### **CORPORATE COMMITMENT**

In an effort to address contemporary local needs, we, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, commit ourselves and our resources to respond with the compassion of Christ to the hungers of the People of God.

### **Editorial Team**

Editors: Sister Roberta Bailey, *Prioress*  
S. Eileen Dunbar and Development Team  
Writers: Benedictine Sisters  
Web Master: Cheryl Chadick

## *The Great Gift of Easter is Hope*

*The resurrection of Jesus Christ  
“has given us a new birth into a living hope.”*



HE IS RISEN!